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<TEXT>I would like to submit that the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) is wrong in saying that the license structure needs to be changed. In my opinion it would be a grave error to lower the standards in the name of enticing new amateur radio operators. Common sense will tell you that if you expect mediocrity, that is what you will get.

Any time that you lower standards, it results in a new class of people that never had to work for their license. The value of their license, to them is not the same as someone that studied and accomplished a passing grade. When a person works hard for something, that person will safeguard their achievement. The ARRL portrays the license as a barrier to new amateurs. I disagree. Anyone who looks at this honestly will most likely have to admit that amateur radio equipment is quite expensive.

Although there are young amateur radio operators, the vast majority are not active until the mid thirties or forties. I believe this is purely economics. Most young people are trying to get a job, go to college, buy a home, and get married. It takes time and money to do all those things. Usually by the time a person gets into their mid thirties they are finally settles in to life enough to invest into amateur radio.

Also, I might add that having an innate interest in radio propagation is key for any newcomer to progress. Without this interest, a person could just use their personal computer (PC) to communicate by Voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) for much cheaper than a commercial High Frequency (HF) radio.

Lowering standards just allows those without this interest to get on the radio without having the interest to care about 47 CFR Part 97 rules. Ask any parent and the vast majority will admit that the child that works for something will take better care of it than someone that is freely given to.

Putting all this aside, what makes the new generation of amateur radio operators any different? Are they born with less intelligence? Are they incapable of passing the same exams their predecessors did? The ARRL is in essence saying this by proposing to lower standards.

Morse code although not needed in modern times, stands as barrier to those that do not truly have good intentions. Anyone that truly wants something will work hard to achieve it.

I will also submit that the ARRL has a vested interest in this and is not a true advocate to the amateur radio operator.

The ARRL is a direct recipient of membership dues and stands to gain a significant windfall if these prospective new "hams" join the ARRL. Proof of this is shown in the fact that my wife passed her exam two weeks ago and within a week, she received an application from the ARRL.

I question the motives of the ARRL. They claim to be the advocate of amateur radio while at every turn they undermine the amateur radio operator.

I hope that you will consider my statements as a person genuinely concerned with the future of amateur radio.

Thank you for your time,

Paul L. McCord Jr., Amateur Radio K5GLH